

VEGETARIAN

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**Trusted Vegetarian
and Vegan Thai Recipes**



CHEF TUMMY

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VEGETARIAN THAI

TASTY THAI VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN RECIPES

CHEF TUMMY

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INTRODUCTION

Thai cooking offers a delicious variety of vibrant flavors, exciting colors, perfumed smells and satisfying textures for any one seeking inspired vegetarian eating. When eating Thai food, the mouth, the eyes and the nose do a dance like a combination of the limbo and the tango.

Thai cooks and eaters highly value vegetables and fruits as they are available all year long, right from the family garden, nearby fruit trees, the many fresh markets or plucked from bushes by the side of the road.

The Thai dietary practice of enjoying a variety of these fresh foods combined with quick cooking techniques lends itself to making the freshest and most flavorful vegetarian food. Vegetarian cooking, with its gentle treatment of the Earth, is especially revered by Thailand's followers of Buddhism.

Where Do The Recipes Come From?

These recipes were collected over a nine-year period when I lived in Thailand. During that time, I first went to Thai language school so I could speak and read at a basic level, and later attended several professional Thai cooking classes.

Then I went directly to the source to feed my curiosity about Thai food.

I decided to leap before I looked — I went on an ultimate food journey, learning to cook from the real experts — the awesome Aunties and Uncles who make traditional Thai food in their homes and family restaurants.

I took a 6,002-mile motorcycle trek all around the country to learn how to cook authentic Thai food. I wanted to really understand the ingredients and what cooking techniques would make the best tasting Thai dishes.

I went from the top to the bottom and from side to side in Thailand (a country about the same size as Germany or Italy) on a banana-yellow Honda 125-cc motorcycle for eight months during 2007-2008. Every where I went I was able to learn about Thai cooking from generous cooks who let me watch and help them make memorable meals. I learned the key to Thai cooking is the skillful

combination of fresh ingredients with simple techniques that coax out the true flavors. I learned an enormous variety of vegetarian recipes during this trip and the many trips I have taken since. I also taught vegetarian Thai cooking at my Thai cooking school and these recipes were the favorites from my students from over 30 countries.

Thailand Is A Paradise For Vegetarian Eaters

Shopping and cooking in Thailand is a paradise for vegetarians. The sheer variety of vegetables and fruits in a typical Thai market is staggering — row after row of bright red and green chiles, sprawling vegetable displays with five types of eggplant, three types of basil, and bucket after bucket of fresh mint, lemongrass, cilantro, plus stacks of oranges, dragon fruit, bananas, pomelos, watermelons, and a dozen other fruits.

These recipes have been adapted from traditional Thai family recipes. Where Thai cooking uses fish sauce and fermented shrimp paste to add salt to dishes, we have substituted soy sauce. Please see the next section for tips and techniques on how to select and prepare these vegetarian ingredients.

We will teach you how to select the right ingredients to make memorable meals at home and make your food taste authentically delicious. Choosy cooks choose carefully and we will guide you to the right choices.

Enjoy this collection of Thai vegetarian recipes and please see our website for new recipes.

The website is www.cheftummy.com.

YOUR “HOW TO” GUIDE TO MAKING TASTY AND AUTHENTIC THAI VEGETARIAN FOOD

Here are some suggestions on what ingredients to use, substitutions for hard to find ingredients, plus some cooking tips and techniques.

- Many commercially made Thai curry pastes are not strictly vegetarian since they contain a type of fermented shrimp. Included in this cookbook are recipes for red, green and Massaman style curry paste that have no shrimp or other animal products. These pastes are easy to make at home and the paste can be stored in the refrigerator or freezer with great success.
- Vegetable oil is best for Thai stir-fried dishes, never olive oil. Since Thai food gets most of its flavor from a spicy sauce, an intense curry paste or other strong ingredients, the neutral taste of vegetable oil is preferred to the fruity taste of olive oil. You can use vegetable oil or canola oil or other nut oils as you prefer.
- Cilantro and coriander are the same herb. The seeds are usually called coriander seeds (we see these seeds in the curry paste recipes).
- Italian parsley is not a substitute for cilantro. Ever. They resemble each other but they don't taste the same.
- The flavor in the cilantro plant is concentrated in the roots and stems, not the leaves. If you can buy cilantro with the roots intact, do so. Once you rinse off any dirt and trim off the root tendrils, you are in flavor city (cilantro stems and roots are the basis for the highly treasured and revered “Three Buddies” cilantro pesto paste recipe in this cookbook). The leaves are used for color and as a garnish in Thai dishes, rather than the basis of cilantro flavor for the dish.
- Thai cooking primarily relies on two chiles: the small but potent Thai “bird’s eye chile” and the larger, longer, less spicy Thai “sky-pointing chile” fruit (all chiles and all things with seeds are technically fruits, as you know, Chef!). If these are not available in your market, we have included specific chile

substitutes and their appropriate quantities in the recipes.

- When adding strong flavors such as chiles or soy sauce, it is easier to add than subtract. So add a little of the flavoring at a time and taste to see if you need more.
- If you have accidentally made a dish too spicy, you can reduce the spice by adding sugar or honey.
- Thai eaters eat rice with each spoonful of food, so the food is often highly spiced to serve as a counterpoint to the bland rice. You may adjust any dish to your own level of spice tolerance as eaters in Thailand also do.
- The serving sizes in this cookbook suggest how much food the recipe makes in terms of eating a multi-dish Thai meal. Thai eaters like to enjoy several small portions of various foods, plus rice. If you are going to make a recipe as a standalone dish, you will have to recalculate the number of servings from each recipe.
- The hardy coconut palm tree can be found all over Thailand's central and southern provinces. The white meat inside is used to make coconut cream for cooking. If you do not have access to fresh coconut, we recommend coconut cream from a can as the thicker cream has a more luxurious taste relative to coconut milk. Beware of using coconut cream intended for making sweet cocktails like Pina Coladas — the added sugar in these types of coconut cream is unnecessary. So look for brands of coconut cream that have no added sugar. Reliable Thai brands include *Chao Koh*, *Mae Ploy* and *Aroy-D*.
- Tofu for these recipes should be the firm type, not soft. The type of tofu we want is alternatively labelled “firm” or “extra firm” or “hard” tofu on the package. We use the firmest tofu so we can add it to soups or stir-fry it without it falling apart. We do not use the soft type tofu as it disintegrates when subjected to stir-frying. Typically, the tofu we use is sold in 14-ounce containers. Each 14-ounce container has roughly 4 cups of tofu.
- When the recipe directs you to stir-fry, this means moving your spatula under the food and flipping it in the pan so the ingredients come in contact with the hot pan, and with each other. Since the amount of heat in your cooking pan will vary according to the heat your stove generates and the thickness of the

pan you use, please pay careful attention when stir-frying so the food is moved frequently and does not burn.

- Thai cooking places some importance on cutting the ingredients the same size so they cook at the same rate in the hot cooking pan. Please pay attention to the measurements in the recipes. Also, we have written the recipes so the densest ingredients that take longer to cook are added first, giving them the time to cook.
- There is a conversion table for metric users at the end of this cookbook to convert Imperial ounces to metric measurements and Fahrenheit to Celsius.

RECIPES

THAI TASTY TOASTED CHILE CASHEWS

INTRODUCTION

These salty bar snacks are always big hit. The hardest part of the recipe is not eating all of them before your guests arrive! So I make two batches, and share one with my valued guests — the rest are for me, because I deserve them.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 people as an appetizer • Prep time is 2 minutes • Cooking time is 5 minutes • Total time 7 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- unsalted cashew nuts, 8 ounces (or can use salted cashews — see the instructions) • vegetable oil, 1 tablespoon • garlic, 1 tablespoon, peel removed and finely chopped • scallions or spring onions, 3 tablespoons, root removed and stalk finely chopped • lime juice, 1 tablespoon • crushed dried chiles, 1/2 teaspoon (the kind you see as a topping in a pizza parlor) • salt, 1/4 teaspoon or to taste

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a skillet or wok on your stove burner. Turn on the heat under the pan to medium-high. Do not add the vegetable oil, Chef — that is for preparing the other ingredients. We are going to first dry roast the cashew nuts to give them a toasted flavor. If you cannot find unsalted cashews, don't worry; just adjust the amount of salt you add later.
2. Scatter the cashew nuts in the dry pan, and stir until they are golden brown, about 2 minutes. The length of time it takes to make any stir-fried dish will vary according to the amount of heat your stove generates and the thickness of your cooking pan. So pay attention, Chef, to this step so the cashews do not burn. Remove the toasted cashew nuts and set aside in a bowl. We will add these toasted nuts to the rest of the ingredients in a minute.
3. In your cooking pan, heat the vegetable oil and fry the garlic until light brown, about 1 minute.
4. Add the cashew nuts back to the cooking pan and sprinkle the crushed dried chiles over them. Add the spring onion and stir-fry for 1 minute until the spring onion gets soft.
5. Add the lime juice and salt and stir. Place the cooked cashew nuts in a serving bowl and serve warm.

THAI TOFU LETTUCE CUPS

INTRODUCTION

This easy to make dish uses playful lettuce cups to hold the zesty tofu stir-fry.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 6 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 5 minutes • Total time is 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons • shallots or red onion, 4 tablespoons, skin removed and finely minced • garlic, 2 tablespoons, skin removed and finely minced • fresh Thai chile, 1 teaspoon or more to taste, finely minced • tofu, the firm kind, about 2 cups, cut into 1/2-inch squares • soy sauce, 1 tablespoon • lime juice, 2 tablespoons • iceberg lettuce or the stouter sections of Bibb lettuce, 6 lettuce leaves, core removed, leaves separated into “cups” • cilantro, 1 cup, minced finely

INSTRUCTION

1. Heat a skillet or wok over medium-high heat.
2. When the pan is hot, add 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil and swirl to coat the pan.
3. Add the garlic, shallot and fresh chiles and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly.
4. Add the tofu pieces and cook until browned, about 3 minutes.
5. Add the soy sauce and lime juice. Cook only 30 seconds while stirring to combine with the rest of the ingredients. Remove the pan from the heat and let the food cool for 2 minutes.
6. Using a serving spoon, portion the tofu stir-fry equally into 6 of the lettuce cups.
7. Garnish the tofu stir-fry with the cilantro leaves.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH WITH SWEET SPICY ROASTED CHILE SAUCE

INTRODUCTION

This dish is a feast for the eyes with a great color contrast between the orange squash and the green spinach.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 30 minutes in the oven • Total time is 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- butternut squash, about 1 pound, cut into two halves with seeds removed • vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons • garlic, 1 tablespoon, skin removed and coarsely chopped • onion, 1 medium, skin removed and cut into 1-inch strips, approximately 1 cup • baby spinach leaves, approximately 8 cups, packed • roasted red chile paste, 2 tablespoons, store-bought or home made (see the red chile paste recipe in this cookbook) • soy sauce, 2 teaspoons, or to taste • water or vegetable stock, 1 tablespoon (see vegetable stock recipe in this cookbook)
- ## **INSTRUCTION**

1. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Prepare the butternut squash by cutting in the squash in half. Scoop out the seeds. Place the two halves of the squash on a baking sheet. Roast in the middle rack of the oven for 30 minutes or until tender. You can check the doneness of the squash with a fork — when the fork can pierce the squash with slight resistance, it is ready to be removed from the oven. When cooked, remove from the oven and let cool. Once the squash is cooled, peel the squash and cut into 1-inch square pieces.
3. Place a skillet or wok on top of the stove and heat over medium heat for 30 seconds.
4. Add the vegetable oil to the cooking pan and swirl it around to coat the surface of the pan.
5. Add the garlic and onion pieces and cooking the pan, siring frequently so all sides of the garlic and onion come in contact with the hot pan. Cook 2

minutes until the garlic and onion have softened.

6. Add the squash and the spinach to the pan and stir with confidence — the spinach will wilt as it comes in contact with the hot pan.
7. Add the roasted red chile paste, soy sauce and water or vegetable stock. The water or vegetable stock helps steam and flavor the spinach, so continue to stir with vigor so all parts of the spinach come in contact with the hot pan.
8. Continue cooking about 1 to 2 minutes until the spinach has changed from the dry and matte finish appearance to sleek and shiny, all covered with the vegetable oil, chile paste, soy sauce and water or vegetable stock.
9. When all the spinach has wilted and changed color, remove the food from the heat and place in a serving dish.

PHAT THAI — THAI STIR-FRIED RICE NOODLES

INTRODUCTION

One of the best known and best loved Thai dishes, Phat Thai translates to “Thai stir-fried rice noodles” — a dish everyone loves. This dish is very popular because it is easy to customize it by adding many different ingredients to the rice noodles and it can be altered to each diner’s love for spicy or salty or tangy flavors.

It is far easier to quickly make one serving of Phat Thai well and then quickly make another, rather than to try to make a larger quantity and overwhelm the pan. So cook up one for your guest and then make another — once you have the ingredients ready, the cooking time is brief.

Chef, do give yourself the best chance of success by reading the recipe carefully, twice. The successful, prepared cook has all the ingredients carefully measured and ready to add to the dish in the proper sequence, in a timely fashion, to get the best result.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 1 as a main course • Prep time is 20 minutes, including time for the noodles to soften in hot water • Cooking time is minutes • Total time is 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- dried rice noodles, 6 ounces — the Phat Thai noodles are usually made in Thailand’s Chantaburi province and resemble Italian pasta shapes like fettuccine • vegetable oil for stir-frying the dish — as much as 1 cup for cooking the noodles, depending on how dry the noodles are and the heat your stove generates. Phat Thai can take a surprising amount of oil to ensure the noodles don’t burn in the pan, Chef!
- garlic, 1 tablespoon, skin removed and coarsely chopped • egg, 1, taken out of the shell and beaten to combine the yolk and white • vegetable stock, 1/4 cup, (can use store-bought or see the recipe in this cookbook) • tamarind liquid, 2 tablespoons (can use store-bought or see the recipe in this cookbook or you can substitute lime juice) • yellow bean paste, 1 tablespoon • sugar, 1

to 2 teaspoons • soy sauce, 1 tablespoon • red chile flakes, 1/2 teaspoon.
Please note that the spice level in dried chile flakes can vary considerably, so add a little and taste the dish to see if it spicy enough for you. You have been warned.

- peanuts, dry roasted and salted type, 1/2 cup, pieces separated • bean sprouts, 2 cups. Note we will use 1 cup in the stir fry and use 1 cup as garnish on the plate • scallion or green onion, 3 stalks, roots removed, cut into 1-inch pieces
 - lime, 1 fruit, cut into quarters
- INSTRUCTION

1. Preparing the noodles: the Thai rice noodles have to be soaked in warm water until they are pliable, then drained and cooked in hot oil with the rest of the ingredients. Place the noodles in warm water and let soak for 20 minutes. When you see the noodles have gone from an opaque color to a white color and from stiff to pliable, they are ready to be drained. Drain the noodles well and keep near the stove for cooking.
2. Preparing the dish: heat a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil to the hot cooking pan and coat the inside of the pan evenly. Add the garlic pieces and stir-fry them for 1 minute until light brown all sides. Once the garlic is browned, remove from the pan and set aside for future use in the dish. Leave the oil in the pan.
3. Add the beaten egg and use your spatula to spread the liquid egg all around the pan. Add more oil if you need to — we want the eggs soft with no hard edges and no dried egg as a result of not having enough oil in the pan. As the egg begins to set, use your spatula to break apart the egg to make soft scrambled eggs. Remove the cooked eggs from the pan and set aside for incorporation in the dish later. Leave the oil in the pan.
4. Add 2 tablespoons of oil to the cooking pan and swirl the oil in the pan so all parts are covered — this helps to keep the noodles from sticking to the pan. Add the noodles to the pan and use the spatula to separate the noodle strands and position them across the center of the pan so the noodles get a chance to cook.
5. Add the flavorings now: add the vegetable stock, tamarind liquid (or lime juice), yellow bean sauce, sugar, soy sauce and toss the noodles in these flavoring liquids.
6. Again move the noodles in the pan so they are stretched out and come in contact with the hot pan.
7. During this cooking process, add vegetable oil to the pan if the noodles look like that are sticking. Phat Thai takes a surprising amount of vegetable oil,

doesn't it, Chef!

8. Add the cooked garlic, chile flakes and about half of the chopped peanuts and mix in with the noodles by scooping under the noodles and flipping them repeatedly.
9. Add half of the bean sprouts to the pan and stir to mix with the rest of ingredients in the pan. Now test several pieces of the noodle — the noodles should be slightly resistant to the tooth. You can evaluate whether you want to further customize the dish by adding more soy sauce to make it saltier or more red chile flakes to kick up the spice.
10. The final touch before plating the dish is to squeeze two of the lime slices over the dish to give it that bright citrus taste.
11. Now we make the plate look pretty: using a spatula, you can slide the cooked noodles out of the pan on to a serving plate. Now take the reserved peanuts and place them in a heap along the side of the serving plate. On the other side, please place the reserved bean sprouts. Nicely done, Chef. Now you can artfully arrange the remaining two slices of lime on the plate as you like. Step back and admire your creation.
12. After you present the completed Phat Thai to your guests, inform them they can mix in the bean sprouts on the plate and the peanuts on the plate into the noodles. You might also suggest they can customize their own plate of food by adding some lime juice from the two limes slices, as well.
13. Phat Thai is best eaten with a spoon and chopsticks, or a fork if you like.

THAI RED PEPPER AND EGGPLANT STIR-FRY WITH ROASTED CHILE PASTE

INTRODUCTION

The recipe blends the five main flavors of Thai food: the savory and spicy taste of roasted chile with sweet red bell peppers, salty soy sauce and the slightly bitter eggplant for a harmonious flavor. You can use commercially made roasted chile paste or use the recipe included in this cookbook.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 people as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes
- Cooking time is 10 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

- red bell pepper, about 1 cup, stems and seeds removed, pepper cut into 1-inch by 1/2-inch pieces • eggplant, 2 purple Japanese type, about 3 cups, cut into 1-inch pieces • vegetable oil, 3 tablespoons • red onion, about 1 cup, stem and skin removed, cut into 1-inch by 1/4-inch pieces • garlic, 3 tablespoons, skin removed and coarsely chopped • sugar, 1 tablespoon (can use palm sugar or brown sugar) • water or vegetable stock, 1 tablespoon • soy sauce, 2 teaspoons • roasted red chile paste, 2 tablespoons (can use store-bought or see the recipe in this cookbook)

INSTRUCTION

1. Heat a skillet or wok over medium-high heat for 30 seconds.
2. Add the vegetable oil and swirl it in your cooking pan so the surface is well coated.
3. Add the onion and garlic and stir-fry in the hot oil until the onion changes color and looks glossy. If the garlic begins to burn, remove the pan from the heat and lower the heat under the pan. Continue to cook until you see the onion has changed color, about 2 minutes.
4. Add the eggplant pieces and move them through the oil frequently so each side of the eggplant gets coated with the oil. Cook the eggplant for 5 minutes until the pieces become tender but are not falling apart. The amount of time the eggplant will take to cook will vary, depending on the thickness of your cooking pan and the heat generated by your stove, so give some attention to this part of the recipe.

5. Once the eggplant is cooked, add the chile paste, sugar, water or vegetable stock and soy sauce and toss all the ingredients well in the pan.
6. Add the red pepper slices and toss with the other ingredients. Continue tossing until the red pepper slices get tender, about 2 minutes.
7. Turn off the heat and taste the dish to determine if it has the balance you like. At this time, you could add more roasted chile paste if you want more spice or more soy sauce if you want more the dish more salty.

TOFU RICE SOUP WITH ZESTY LEMONGRASS AND BASIL

INTRODUCTION

This soup is both hearty and refreshing with the clean, citrus taste of lime juice and lemongrass. This dish gets great flavor from vegetable stock and there is a recipe for the vegetable stock in this cookbook.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 people as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 10 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- vegetable stock, 5 cups (store-bought or see the recipe in this cookbook) • lemongrass, 5 stalks, roots trimmed off, stalk cut into 3-inch pieces and each piece split down the middle to release the flavor within • sugar, 1 teaspoon, white granulated sugar is preferred • tofu, the firm variety, 8 ounces, cut into 1-inch chunks • cooked rice, 2 cups, preferable Thai long-grained jasmine rice (see the recipe for cooking rice in this cookbook) • button mushrooms, 8 mushrooms or about 3/4 cup, stems removed, cleaned, thinly sliced • plum tomatoes, 3 tomatoes, stems removed, cut into 1-inch pieces (can substitute 8 cherry tomatoes, cut in half) • lime juice, 4 tablespoons • cilantro leaf, 2 tablespoons roughly chopped • fresh basil, 2 tablespoons, roughly torn

INSTRUCTION

1. First, we make a broth out of the lemongrass. Place a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the vegetable stock, lemongrass and sugar to the pan. Bring the vegetable stock to a boil and add the lemongrass. Reduce the heat to medium-low and boil the vegetable stock and lemongrass for 5 minutes — the boiling liquid helps draw out the citrus flavor of the lemongrass. After 5 minutes, strain out the lemongrass pieces and discard.
2. To the vegetable stock, add the tofu, cooked rice and mushrooms. Increase the heat to medium and simmer the soup until it starts to boil again, about 2 minutes. Now remove the soup from the heat.
3. Now add in the tomatoes and most of the lime juice. Taste the dish — it should have a tangy taste from the lime juice and the lemongrass. If you like,

you can add more of the reserved lime juice.

4. Add in the cilantro and basil. Place all this in a serving bowl and enjoy!

HOT AND SOUR TOFU SOUP WITH LEMONGRASS “TOM YAM” STYLE

INTRODUCTION

This is a Thai classic that gets great flavor from mushrooms with the excellent blend of spicy from the chiles and tangy / sour from the lime juice, lime leaf, and lemongrass. You can easily adjust the tangy and spicy elements of the soup to fit your own palate.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 7 minutes • Total time is 12 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- vegetable stock or water, 4 cups, (use store-bought stock or see the vegetable stock recipe in this cookbook) • tofu, 1 cup, the firm type of tofu, cut into 1-inch cubes • lemongrass, 3 stalks, tough roots removed, outer skin removed to reveal the purple rings on the inside stalk, with these stalks cut into 2-inch pieces and bruised to let out the flavor concentrated inside the stalk • galangal, 2 tablespoons, skin removed and discarded, with galangal cut into 1/4-inch coins • wild lime leaf, 10 leaves, center rib removed and discard, roughly torn in two pieces (sometimes this herb is also labelled “kaffir lime leaf”) • Thai “bird’s eye chile”, 2 chiles, stem removed and bruised with a knife to release the spice inside • scallion or green onion, 3 stalks, roots trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces • button mushrooms, 1 cup, stems removed and cut into quarters • lime juice, 2 tablespoons • soy sauce, 1 tablespoon • sugar, 1 teaspoon • cilantro leaf, 1/2 cup, for garnish

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a saucepan over medium high heat on your stovetop.
2. Add the vegetable stock or water and bring to a boil.
3. When the stock or water has boiled, add the lemongrass, galangal, wild lime leaf, chile and scallion / green onion — the hot liquid will help accelerate the flow of the flavor in the ingredients into the liquid.
4. Cook for 5 minutes at a mild boil until you see the lemongrass change color from a bright green to a duller washed out color — this means the flavor in

the lemongrass has been released into the liquid.

5. Now add the tofu, mushrooms, lime juice, soy sauce and sugar and stir well so the sugar dissolves in the hot liquid.
6. When the soup reaches the boil again, the ingredients are cooked. Turn off the heat under the pan.
7. Place the cooked soup into a serving bowl.
8. Garnish with the cilantro.

ZESTY THAI FRESH VEGETABLE SALAD WITH CRUNCHY PEANUTS

INTRODUCTION

Millions of times a day, Thai eaters enjoy a fresh vegetable salad made memorable by combining fresh vegetables with a dressing of tangy lime juice, salty soy sauce, spicy chiles and a bit of sweet, nutty palm sugar. Toasted peanuts give the salad a bit of crunch, too.

Most often this salad is made with unripe papaya. Thailand and other tropical countries have fresh, tart raw papaya fruit all year round. Since most papaya in Western countries has matured into the ripe, orange, sweet fruit by the time we see it in the fresh food markets, we can make this salad with grated carrot to give it the fresh, juicy, tart taste of the original.

If you have access to green papaya, you can use it alone to make the salad, or mix one-half papaya with one-half carrot for a more colorful dish.

This dish is called “Som Tam” on Thai restaurant menus. In Thai culinary terms, “Som” means “tangy” and “Tam” means to pound and mix the ingredients together so they are well blended in the salad.

This salad gets its unique, fresh taste by thoroughly mixing the dressing ingredients of the chile, garlic, sugar, lime juice and soy sauce so the dressing evenly coats the carrot, tomato, green beans and peanuts. This clean, harmonious balance excites the mouth without adding lots of fatty calories.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 people as a side salad as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 8 minutes • Cooking time is 3 minutes for toasting peanuts • Total time is 11 minutes
- ### **INGREDIENTS**

- carrot, 4 cups, carrot skin peeled off and the carrot grated or sliced into 1-inch slender matchsticks • green beans, 2 cups, beans trimmed at both ends and cut into 1-inch pieces • cherry tomatoes, 12, tomatoes sliced in half • garlic, about 1 tablespoon, finely minced • 1 Thai hot chili – you can add more if it is not

spicy enough for your liking; slice the chile into the thinnest rings you can so it spreads the chile heat evenly through the rest of the dressing • lime juice, 3 tablespoons • soy sauce, 1-2 tablespoons, to taste • sugar, 1 teaspoon • unsalted peanuts, 4 tablespoons, hard outer shell removed, toasted in a dry pan for about 2 minutes until light brown but not burned **INSTRUCTION**

1. Dry roast the peanuts. We dry fry the peanuts to give them a toasted, smoky flavor, so no oil is needed in the wok or saucepan. Place a dry wok or saucepan over medium heat. Add the peanuts to the pan and stir constantly for about 2 minutes to prevent them from burning. When you see the outside of the peanuts get a little brown, the peanuts are ready. Remove the peanuts from the pan into a mixing bowl and let cool.
2. Add the garlic, chile, sugar, lime juice and soy sauce to the peanuts in the mixing bowl. Stir the mixture thoroughly so the sugar dissolves in the lime juice and soy sauce, about 20 seconds.
3. Add the carrot, tomato and green beans into the mixing bowl and mix to coat the vegetables with the dressing. Taste to see if you have achieved a balance between salty, sweet, tangy/sour and spicy. If the salad is too spicy, add a little more sugar, as it reduces the sting of chile. Serve at room temperature.

NORTHEASTERN THAI STYLE BAMBOO SHOOT SALAD

INTRODUCTION

I learned this dish when visiting friends in the rural Northeastern city of Udon Thani. It uses the simple but delicious roasted rice powder crouton on top that adds crunch and fragrance. The roasted rice powder crouton recipe is included in this cookbook.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 5 minutes • Total time is 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

For The Main Salad

- garlic, 1 tablespoon, skin removed and finely chopped • green onions or scallions, 2 stalks, approximately 1/4 cup, sliced thinly across the stalk • shallots, 2 tablespoons, skin removed and finely chopped • vegetable stock, 2 tablespoons (can use store-bought or use the recipe included in this cookbook) • bamboo shoots, 1 can or 14 ounces, drained and cut into 1-inch pieces if whole. Some Asian markets have a display of bamboo shoots they have prepared and these can also be delicious • lime juice, 2 tablespoons • red chile pepper flakes, 1/2 teaspoon or to taste. Please note that the spice level in dried chile flakes can vary considerably, so add a little and taste the dish. You have been warned.
 - soy sauce, 1 teaspoon or more, to taste • sugar, 2 teaspoons, white granulated sugar is best • mint, 1/2 cup of leaves to use as garnish • roasted rice powder as a Thai crouton, 1 tablespoon (the recipe can be found in this cookbook)
- To Accompany the Salad**
- savoy cabbage leaves, 4 leaves, cut into 3-inch pieces so you can use them to pick up the salad like a scoop and eat it, Chef!
 - green beans, 10, ends trimmed and cut into 2-inch lengths

INSTRUCTION

1. In a bowl, place the garlic, green onions or scallions, shallots, vegetable stock, lime juice, red chile flakes, soy sauce, and sugar and mix together so the sugar is dissolved in the stock, lime juice and soy sauce. Add a few of the

mint leaves; reserve some for garnish.

2. Open the can of bamboo shoots, drain off the liquid, rinse the shoots and drain one more time. Usually the pieces are too large to fit on a fork, so cut the bamboo pieces into matchsticks about 1-inch long and 1/4-inch wide.
3. Add the bamboo shoot slivers to the ingredients in the bowl and mix together well. Now taste the dish and see if it pleases your palate for the balance of salty, spicy, sweet and tangy. You can adjust the seasoning as you like now that you understand the basics of this dish.
4. Place the salad in a serving bowl. Add some of the mint leaves as a garnish.
5. Sprinkle the roasted rice powder on top.
6. You can arrange the cabbage leaves and green beans on a plate. These are served to provide a cool, pleasing taste in the mouth in contrast to the spicy and tangy notes of the salad.

MUSHROOM SALAD WITH TANGY LIME AND CHILE DRESSING

INTRODUCTION

Two kinds of mushroom give that full flavor in the mouth to this tangy and spicy salad.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 8 minutes • Total time is 13 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons • garlic, 1 tablespoon, skin removed and coarsely chopped • onion, yellow, 1/2 cup, skin removed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces • button mushrooms, about 2 cups, stem removed, cut into 1/2-inch pieces • oyster mushrooms, thick stem trimmed, torn into bite size pieces, about 2 cups • vegetable stock, 1/2 cup (can use store-bought or see the recipe in this cookbook) • lime juice, 3 tablespoons • scallion or green onion, 2 stalks, about 1/2 cup, thinly sliced across • mint, 2 tablespoons, finely chopped • shallot or red onion, 1 tablespoon, skin removed and finely chopped • soy sauce, 1 teaspoon • sugar, 2 teaspoons, white granulated sugar is best • red chile pepper flakes, 1/2 teaspoon or to taste (beware — different brands can vary considerably in how much spice is in the chile flakes, so consider yourself warned, Chef) • roasted rice powder, 1 tablespoon (see recipe in this cookbook) • lettuce, Bibb or iceberg leaves to line the serving plate.

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a skillet or wok over medium heat and let warm for 30 seconds.
2. Add the vegetable oil and let warm for 30 seconds.
3. Test if the vegetable oil is hot enough by adding one small piece of garlic to the oil; if the garlic sizzles upon hitting the pan, the oil is ready for the rest of the cooking steps.
4. Add the onion and cook for 2 minutes while tossing frequently in the hot oil. When the onion has turned from white to glossy and almost brown, you are ready for the next cooking step. Every stove emits different amounts of heat and pans can vary in thickness and therefore how much heat reaching the

food can vary, so keep a watchful eye on the onions so they do not burn.

5. Add the garlic and toss well in the oil with the onion.
6. Add the button mushrooms and cook for 2 minutes, tossing frequently with the onion.
7. Add the oyster mushrooms and cook about 3 minutes with the button mushrooms, garlic and onions. You will know this part of the cooking process is complete when you see all the ingredients are glossy and have reduced in size as the water has evaporated out.
8. Remove the pan from the heat and reserve on a plate to cool.
9. In a bowl, mix the lime juice, scallions or green onions, soy sauce, mint, shallot, sugar and chile flakes. Mix this well so the sugar dissolves.
10. Now add back the cooked onions, garlic and mushrooms and stir well to combine.
11. Place this salad in a serving bowl.
12. Sprinkle the roasted rice powder over the top and serve.

VEGETABLE STIR-FRY WITH RED CURRY PASTE

INTRODUCTION

This is a quick and delicious favorite that uses red curry paste to flavor the vegetables (there is a recipe for red curry paste in this cookbook).

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-dish That meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 5 minutes • Total time 10 minutes

- vegetable oil, 3 tablespoons • tofu, the firm kind, 2 cups, cut into 1/2-inch squares • green beans, 1 cup, tops and tails trimmed and cut on the diagonal into 1-inch pieces • red curry paste, 3 tablespoons • eggplants, the purple Japanese, 2 about 8-inches long, stem removed and discarded, cut diagonally across the eggplant into 1/2-inch slices (diagonal looks cool, Chef) • vegetable stock, 1/2 cup (see the recipe for vegetable stock in this cookbook) • soy sauce, 2 teaspoons • sugar, 2 teaspoons, white granulated sugar preferred • basil leaves, 1/2 cup • red bell pepper, 1 cup, stem and seeds removed, cut into 1-inch by 1/4-inch slivers

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a skillet or wok over medium-low heat.
2. Add the vegetable oil in the cooking pan and let heat for 30 seconds.
3. Add the curry paste and mash it into the oil in the pan so the curry paste gets evenly distributed in the oil — we want it to evenly coat the other ingredients so pay attention to this mashing. Cook about 2 minutes until the paste is fragrant.
4. Throw in the green beans, eggplant, vegetable stock, soy sauce and sugar and mix well so the sugar dissolves in the cooking oil and vegetable stock. Cook for about 5 minutes, stir-frying the vegetables so they get coated with the curry paste flavored oil.
5. Now add the tofu and toss with the vegetables so the tofu is well coated with the seasonings, about 2 minutes.
6. To gain style points and make your dish look cool, you can stack up the basil leaves on top of each other, then roll them into a cylinder like a cigar, and

deftly cut across the leaves to make slender strips. You want to do this. You will look cooler than you already look.

7. Now turn off the heat under the pan and add the artfully cut basil leaves and the red pepper strips. Toss to combine and place in a serving dish.

STIR-FRIED VEGETABLES WITH THAI CILANTRO “THREE BUDDIES” PESTO PASTE

INTRODUCTION

This simple stir-fried dish gets great flavor from the cilantro, garlic and pepper pesto paste that is nicknamed the “Three Buddies” since the three ingredients pair so well together. The paste is a snap to make in a mortar or kitchen appliance and the recipe is included in this cookbook. This paste is always made fresh in Thai kitchens and so is not seen sold in containers in a supermarket (as is the case for curry pastes).

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes to make the paste and prepare the vegetables • Cooking time is 5 minutes • Total time is 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons • onion, 1 cup, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- carrot, 1 cup, peeled and cut into matchsticks measuring 1-inch by 1/4-inch
- green beans, 1 cup, trimmed and cut on the diagonal into 1-inch pieces (diagonal cut looks cool) • “Three Buddies” paste, 1 tablespoon (see the recipe in this book — not available in stores) • soy sauce, 2 teaspoons or more to taste

INSTRUCTION

1. Please a skillet or wok over medium heat. Allow to heat 30 seconds.
2. Add the vegetable oil and swirl it around in the cooking pan so the pan surface is coated.
3. Add the “Three Buddies” pesto paste and mix well with the oil. If the paste sticks to the cooking pot, add more vegetable oil and lesson the heat (burned paste does not taste good, Chef). We want to paste to get warm but it does not have to cook long, so let’s move on to the next cooking step, Chef.
4. Add the onions and stir-fry for 1 minute until the onion turn glossy.
5. Add the carrots and green beans and stir-fry for 1 minute.
6. We want the vegetables to have a little resistance to the tooth, so turn off the heat under the cooking pan.
7. Add the soy sauce and mix well with the ingredients. Now taste the dish and

see if it is salty enough for you.

STIR-FRIED TOFU AND VEGETABLES IN PEANUT-GINGER SAUCE

INTRODUCTION

Tofu and vegetables get a flavor boost from a peanut-ginger sauce. Serve with pickled cucumbers (recipe in this cookbook) for a low-calorie, nutrient-packed vegetarian meal.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes to make the paste and prepare the vegetables • Cooking time is 5 minutes • Total time is 10 minutes

PEANUT-GINGER SAUCE INGREDIENTS

- water, 5 tablespoons • smooth natural peanut butter, 4 tablespoons • rice vinegar or white vinegar, 1 tablespoon • soy sauce, 2 teaspoons • honey, 2 teaspoons • ginger, 2 teaspoons, peel removed and finely minced • garlic, 2 teaspoons, peel removed and finely mince
- ## **TOFU AND VEGETABLE STIR-FRY INGREDIENTS**

- vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons • tofu, the extra firm type, 4 cups. Drain and rinse tofu; pat dry, slice the tofu block crosswise into eight 1-inch-thick pieces, then coarsely crumble each slice into smaller, uneven pieces.
 - baby spinach, 4 cups packed • sliced mushrooms, 2 cups, stems removed, sliced into 1/4-inch slices • scallions, 4 stalks, approximately 1 cup, root trimmed and discarded, sliced into 1/4-inch rounds
- ## **INSTRUCTION**

1. For the peanut-ginger sauce, whisk the water, peanut butter, vinegar, soy sauce, honey, ginger and garlic together in a bowl and reserve.
2. Place a skillet or wok over medium-high heat.
3. Add the vegetable oil and let it warm 30 seconds.
4. Add tofu and cook in a single layer, without stirring, until the pieces begin to turn golden brown on the bottom, about 5 minutes.
5. Then flip the tofu to the other side and let cook on that flip side until the tofu

is brown, about 5 minutes.

6. Add the spinach, mushrooms, scallions and the peanut-ginger sauce and cook, stirring, until the vegetables are just cooked, about 2 minutes. Taste the dish to see if you want to adjust the seasonings.
7. Remove from the heat and place in a serving dish.

STIR-FRIED VEGETABLES WITH SAVORY SAUCE

INTRODUCTION

This stir-fry uses a sauce you make that will stick to the vegetables and give them a wonderful taste and appearance.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 10 minutes • Cooking time is 5 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

- carrot, 1 cup, top removed, peeled and sliced into 1/4-inch slices • broccoli, 1 cup, cut into florets • galangal or ginger, a thumb-sized piece, skin removed and cut into matchstick pieces • shiitake mushrooms, 5 mushrooms, stem removed and cut into 1/4-inch slices • baby bok choy, 1 cup, leaves cut into 2-inch pieces • red pepper, 1/2 cup, cut into bite-size pieces • green pepper, 1/2 cup, cut into bite-size pieces • scallion or spring onions, 2 stalks, about 1/2 cup, roots removed and cut into 1/4-inch pieces

- SPECIAL STIR-FRY SAUCE:** • vegetable stock or water, 1/4 cup (see the vegetable stock recipe in this cookbook) • soy sauce, 2 tablespoons • lime juice, 1 tablespoon • garlic, 2 tablespoons, peel removed and finely minced • Thai chile, 1 teaspoon, finely minced • sugar, 1 teaspoon, white granulated sugar is preferred
- arrowroot powder or cornstarch, 1 teaspoon dissolved in 2 tablespoons water (this arrowroot or cornstarch helps the sauce thicken so it coats the vegetables)

INSTRUCTION

1. We will start by making the stir-fry sauce. Place a saucepan over medium hot heat.
2. Add the vegetable stock, soy sauce, lime juice and sugar. Cook for 30 seconds or until the sauce begins to bubble. When sauce begins to bubble, turn down the heat to medium-low.
3. Now add the minced garlic and arrowroot or cornstarch you dissolved in the water. Stir until the sauce thickens slightly, about 1 minute. Reserve this sauce for adding to the stir-fry we will make next.

4. Do a taste test on this sauce. You're looking for a balance of salty from the soy sauce, spicy from the garlic and chile, tangy from the lime and sweet from the sugar. You may adjust these flavors to suit your own palate.
5. Now we will make a stir-fry that will incorporate this sauce. Place a skillet or wok over medium-high heat and let warm for 30 seconds.
6. Add 1 tablespoon of oil to the pan and swirl to coat the pan. Add the carrots, mushroom, galangal / ginger and broccoli to the cooking pan and stir-fry for 1 minute.
7. Add the rest of the vegetables, and continue stir-frying another minute or so (until the broccoli turns bright green). Now pour the stir-fry sauce you made earlier into the cooking pan.
8. Stir-fry over heat briefly just long enough to mix the sauce in and then remove from heat.
9. Do one last taste test. If not salty enough, add more soy sauce. If too salty, add another squeeze of lime juice.

STIR-FRIED RICE WITH THREE-COLOR VEGETABLE

INTRODUCTION

Stir-fried rice is one of the most popular dishes in Thailand: it makes efficient use of rice that is leftover from another meal and the traditional flavorings of vegetable oil, garlic, onions and mushroom sauce make this a dish suitable for all diners.

The most successful stir-fried rice dishes uses rice that has been previously boiled, cooled and then made slightly dry so the rice grains absorb the other flavorings in the dish. The steps outlined below have yielded me the best success in getting the rice dry enough to absorb all the flavoring and not have the rice clump in the wok while making the rapid stir-fry. When hot and steaming rice emerges from the rice steamer, the steam coming out of the rice makes it hard to the rice to absorb the other flavorings in the dish. Hence, we use cooled rice.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 people as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 60 minutes, including cooking and cooling the rice • Cooking time is 10 minutes
- Total time is 70 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- rice, 4 cups of cooked and cooled Thai jasmine rice (see recipe below for preparing the rice) • vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons • garlic, 1 tablespoon, skin removed and finely minced • onion, ½ cup, skin removed and cut into 1/8-inch dice • soy sauce, 2 tablespoons • mushroom sauce, 2 tablespoons • sugar, 1 teaspoon, white granulated sugar works best • green beans, 1 cup, top and tail trimmed, cut on the diagonal into 2-inch pieces • Thai “bird’s eye chile”, 1 chile, stems removed or other spicy chile

INSTRUCTION

STEP 1 — PREPARE THE RICE PREFACE: STIR-FRIED RICE IS MADE WITH JASMINE RICE THAT HAS BEEN COOKED, COOLED AND THEN STIR-FRIED WITH WHATEVER INGREDIENTS YOU FAVOR. IT IS BEST OF USE COLD RICE THAT HAS BEEN WELL RINSED OF ANY STARCH SO THE INDIVIDUAL RICE GRAINS ARE SEPARATE AND CAN ABSORB THE FLAVOR OF THE GARLIC, ONION AND MUSHROOM SAUCE THAT ARE TRADITIONALLY USED IN THE DISH.

Rinsing The Raw Rice Grains:

1. Wash jasmine rice thoroughly to get most of the rice starch off each rice grain.
2. Place the amount of rice you wish to cook in a bowl and fill the bowl with water to a couple of inches above the rice.
3. Massage the rice grains in the water to loosen the starch and drain off the water using a colander or strainer.
4. Repeat this between five and seven times until the water being poured out of the bowl runs clear.
5. The amount of starch on the rice can vary according to the brand, so use your own judgement on how many times you must rinse the rice.

Cooking The Rinsed Rice:

1. Place the 4 cups of rinsed rice in your cooking pot and add 6 cups of water so the rice is covered by the water.
2. If you are using an electric rice cooker, turn on the cooker and wait until the rice is cooked.
3. If you are preparing the rice in a cooking pot on top of the stove, bring the rice and water to a soft boil, then reduce the heat to the lowest setting and cook with a cover on the pot for 20 minutes.
4. After 20 minutes, lift off the cover of the cooking pot.
5. If the rice looks like it has absorbed all the water, turn off the heat under the cooking pot. Remove the rice from the heating source and leave the pot on the stove with the cover on so the cooked rice can start to cool.

Cooling The Cooked Rice:

1. After the rice is cooked, spread out the cooked rice on a plate so it cools and get dryer.
2. You should also massage the rice grains after they have cooled so they don't clump together.
3. After the rice is completely cooled and the rice grains are separated, you are ready to make the stir-fry.

Step 2 — Cooking The Stir-Fried Rice:

1. Heat a wok over medium high heat for 30 seconds and add the vegetable oil.

2. Swirl the vegetable oil in the pan and let heat 30 seconds; test to see if the oil is hot enough by adding a small piece of garlic; if the garlic immediately bursts into flame, the oil is too hot. If the garlic starts to brown nicely, add the other garlic pieces and stir-fry them for 15 seconds.
3. Add the onion pieces and stir-fry them in the pan for 1 minute until they turn glassy and soft.
4. Add the green beans and chile and toss with the oil, garlic and onion for 1 minute.
5. Add the rice and mix well with the vegetables. Use your spatula to mix and separate the rice in the pan so there are no clumps of rice.
6. Add the soy sauce, mushroom sauce, sugar and mix well into the rice.
7. Continue stir-frying the ingredients, frequently mixing in the rice with the other ingredients. Taste one of the green beans; if it is crisp but not raw, the dish is finished cooking.
8. Turn off the heat under the pan and place the rice on a serving platter.

CHEF TUMMY TIP: TO MAKE YOUR SERVING PLATE LOOK ATTRACTIVE, YOU CAN DEPOSIT THE COOKED RICE INTO A BOWL, PACK THE COOKED RICE IN THE BOWL AND THEN DECANT THE CONTENTS ON TOP OF A SERVING PLATTER – THIS MAKES THE RICE HAVE A UNIFORM SHAPE WITH SOME VERTICALITY. THAI KITCHENWARE STORES ALSO SELL SPECIAL TEFLON COATED RICE MOULDS IN A VARIETY OF SHAPES.

THAI GRILLED EGGPLANT SALAD

INTRODUCTION

The grilling takes away any bitter taste from the eggplant and the dressing gives your mouth a zing. The pickled garlic is available at Thai and Asian specialty stores and is a great thing to have in your arsenal to give a briny garlic flavor to dishes.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 people as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes
- Cooking time is 10 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

- Thai chile peppers, 2 chiles, stems removed and bruised to release the spice • soy sauce, 2 tablespoons • lime juice, 2 tablespoons • sugar, 1 tablespoon (can use granulated sugar or palm sugar or brown sugar) • pickled garlic juice, 1 tablespoon • pickled garlic, 2 tablespoons sliced • shallots or red onion, about 3 tablespoons, stem removed, peeled and thinly sliced • long purple Japanese eggplants, 2 eggplants, stem removed, see grilling instructions below • cilantro leaf, 1/2 cup for garnish

INSTRUCTION

1. Make the salad dressing by combining the chiles, soy sauce, lime juice, sugar, pickled garlic juice, pickled garlic and shallots or red onion in a bowl and mixing with a whisk or fork. The flavor profile of the dish is equal proportions of sweet, salty and tangy. Of course, you may adjust the flavorings to fit your own palate.
2. Grill the eggplants over a charcoal or gas grill. When they are charred on the outside and soft on the inside, remove from the heat and let them cool. Peel off the blackened skin. Cut into 2-inch chunks and place on a plate.
3. Spoon the dressing over the cooked eggplant.
4. Garnish with the cilantro.

THAI RED CURRY WITH TOFU, RED PEPPERS AND GREEN BEANS

INTRODUCTION

Thai curries are the easiest dishes in the Thai cooking repertoire — you just combine the coconut cream, curry paste and ingredients in a cooking pot and cook! Thai curries are so easy to customize for your preference in salty and spicy, so you can play with the proportions of the flavorings of this dish to make it yours! Please note many of the red curry pastes in the store contain shrimp paste and so are not strictly vegetarian. A vegetarian red curry paste recipe is included in this cookbook.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 2 people as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes
- Cooking time is 10 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

- coconut cream, 3 cups • red curry paste, 1 to 2 tablespoons, to taste (a red curry paste recipe is included in this cookbook) • red pepper, 1 cup, cut into 1-inch pieces • green beans, 1 cup, ends trimmed off and cut 1-inch pieces (cut the pieces on the diagonal for a nice appearance) • tofu, the firm kind, 2 cups, cut into 1-inch pieces • sugar, can use either palm sugar or brown sugar, 1 tablespoon • soy sauce, 1 teaspoon or more to taste

INSTRUCTION

1. Prepare the coconut cream. Give the container a good shake to mix the liquids inside together in case they have separated while on the shelf.
2. Place a saucepan over medium heat and add the coconut cream and heat for 1 minute. This will allow the sweet smell of the coconut to be released and having hot coconut cream helps the red curry paste to dissolve easily.
3. Add the red curry paste to the coconut cream and stir to dissolve the red curry paste. Remember, it is easier to add than subtract in cooking, especially when working with spicy ingredients. So you can play with the recipe and add some red curry paste, taste the dish when done cooking and decide if you want to add more of the spicy paste the next time you prepare it. No one size fits all in terms of how spicy a dish should be, so you can experiment with different brands of curry paste (or your own homemade paste from the recipe

in this book) and reach your happy point.

4. Add the tofu to the coconut cream and red curry paste. Stir to separate the pieces so each comes in contact with the coconut cream and curry paste.
5. Add the red pepper pieces, the green beans, sugar and soy sauce.
6. Turn up the heat to medium high and cook the vegetables until they soften, approximately 5 minutes. Stir and taste occasionally to see if the vegetables have softened but not become lifeless and limp. The time it takes will vary according to the heat your stove generates and the thickness of the pan you use, so pay some attention to this part.
7. Now taste the dish — if you like, you can add more soy sauce or curry paste to achieve the balance we seek of salty, spicy and sweet.

THAI GREEN CURRY WITH BAMBOO SHOOTS, ONION AND ZUCCHINI

INTRODUCTION

The green color in green curry comes from fresh green Thai chiles pounded into a paste with the green skin of a kaffir lime and green lemongrass. The green Thai “bird’s eye chiles” are quite spicy, so palm sugar is used in the dish to balance out the chile fire. A recipe for green curry paste is included in this cookbook or you can use a paste purchased at the store. Please note many of the green curry pastes in the store contain shrimp paste and so are not strictly vegetarian.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 2 people as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes
- Cooking time is 10 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- coconut cream, 3 cups • green curry paste, 1 to 2 tablespoons, depending on your palate • yellow onion, 1/2 cup, skin removed and chopped into 1/2-inch pieces • zucchini, the purple Japanese kind, about 1 cup, the top and tail removed, and cut into 1-inch square pieces • bamboo shoots, 1 8-ounce can, drained and rinsed, cut into 1-inch by 1/4-inch pieces • sugar, 1 tablespoon, palm sugar or brown sugar • soy sauce, 1 teaspoon or more according to your taste • cilantro leaf, approximately 1/2 cup for garnish on the curry

INSTRUCTION

1. Prepare the coconut cream. Give the container a good shake to mix the liquids inside together in case they have separated while on the shelf.
2. Place a saucepan over medium heat and add the coconut cream and heat for 1 minute. This will allow the sweet smell of the coconut to be released and help the green curry paste to dissolve easily in the hot coconut cream.
3. Once the coconut cream is hot, add the green curry paste and stir well to dissolve.
4. With vegetable curries, you want to add the denser ingredients first to give them time to soften in the boiling coconut cream. So add the onion and bamboo shoots and stir to separate the onion layers and bamboo shoots.
5. Add the sugar and soy sauce and stir to mix well.

6. Cook for about 7 minutes, stirring occasionally. After 7 minutes, taste one of the onion pieces to see if it has softened. If the onions have lost their acidic taste and are soft we are ready for the next step.
7. Add the zucchini pieces and cook an additional minute. Taste the zucchini and see if it has reached the proper state of softened but not mushy. The time it takes this dish to cook will vary according to the heat your stove generates and the thickness of the pan you use, so pay some attention to this part.
8. Once you are satisfied that the vegetables are cooked, taste the dish and see if you want to add more soy sauce to make it saltier and/or more green curry paste to make it spicier.
9. Pour the green curry into a serving dish and scatter the cilantro leaf on top to garnish. Take your right arm, place it across your body with your hand behind your left shoulder, the palm facing your back. Now pat yourself on the back for a job well done, Chef!

THAI MASSAMAN CURRY WITH POTATOES AND ONIONS

INTRODUCTION

Massaman curry should be a balance between spicy from the chile paste, sweet from coconut cream and sugar, sour/tangy from the tamarind liquid or lime juice and salty from the soy sauce. Since no two palates are alike, you will use your own preferences for salty versus spicy and sweet versus sour to guide how you flavor your own creation.

A short history and language lesson: This dish is commonly called “Massaman curry” where Massaman notes the Indian or Persian origins of the dish made by people of the Muslim faith who emigrated to Thailand and brought with them the dried spices such as cardamon and cinnamon that give this dish its unique flavor. Massaman means “Muslim” in Thai, hence the name of the dish.

The Massaman curry paste includes dried chiles and dried spices such as coriander seed, and cloves, as well as other dried spices and pounded shallots, garlic, galangal and other fresh ingredients. Many of the Thailand’s Muslims live in Southern Thailand, and this dish is widely cooked in the South.

To allow the rich flavor of the spices to marry with the potato and onion, this dish can be cooked ahead of time and served reheated the next day.

Please note many of the Massaman curry pastes in the store contain shrimp paste and so are not strictly vegetarian. A vegetarian Massaman curry paste recipe is included in this cookbook.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 2 people as a main course as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 15 minutes to cook the curry • Total time is 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- coconut cream, 3 cups • vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons • potato, 2 cups, peeled and cut into 1-inch-square pieces • onion, 1/2 cup, cut into 1-inch pieces • Massaman curry paste, 1 to 2 tablespoons, or to taste • tamarind liquid, 2

tablespoons or 3 tablespoons lime juice (see the recipe for making tamarind liquid in this cookbook) • palm sugar, 1 tablespoon (you can substitute brown sugar or cane sugar) • soy sauce, 1 tablespoon • cashew nuts or peanuts, 2 tablespoons, unsalted and dry roasted over low heat in a dry pan until fragrant, about 2 minutes (optional) • cilantro leaves for garnish, 1 tablespoon

INSTRUCTION

1. Prepare the coconut cream. Give the container a good shake to mix the liquids inside together in case they have separated while on the shelf.
2. Place a saucepan over medium heat and add the coconut cream and heat for 1 minute. This will allow the sweet smell of the coconut to be released and help the Massaman curry paste you will add to dissolve.
3. Add the Massaman curry paste and stir well so it dissolves into the warm coconut cream.
4. With vegetable curries, you want to add the denser ingredients to give them time to soften in the boiling coconut cream. So add the potatoes and onions to the coconut cream.
5. Now increase the heat to medium high and cook the potatoes and onion for about 7 minutes. When you can pierce the potatoes easily with a fork, they are done.
6. You can customize the dish for your own preference for adding a tangier taste with the tamarind juice, a saltier taste with the soy sauce and a sweeter taste with sugar. Remember it is easier to add than subtract these flavors, so add a little and taste the dish. Add these ingredients to your own taste. Now taste the dish to see if it pleases your own preference. You can adjust the dish by adding small portions of the tamarind juice, soy sauce or sugar until you achieve the balance you prefer. Every cooks' palate is different so you must rely on your own tongue and preference.
7. Once you are satisfied you have achieved a balanced flavor through your careful addition of the flavorings, place the Massaman curry in a serving bowl.
8. Sprinkle the toasted nuts on top of the Massaman curry, if using nuts.
9. Add the cilantro leaf to the top of the serving bowl to add a little green color.

HOW TO MAKE THAI JASMINE RICE

INTRODUCTION

Rice is central to the Thai diet so here are some fun facts about rice: • One way in the Thai language to ask in a friendly way how someone is doing by saying, “Have you eaten rice yet?” where rice is a synonym for food. By inquiring if someone has eaten food /rice, you are showing you care about them.

- Rice is the main carbohydrate in Thailand since wheat for bread or pasta does not grow in the country and potatoes are not as frequently grown.
- Thai food is often spicy or piquant to serve as a counter point to the bland rice.
- The most common type of rice grown and eaten in Thailand is jasmine rice — so named since the rice looks like the white petals of the beautiful jasmine flower.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 1 minute • Cooking time is 30 minutes • Total time is 31 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- jasmine rice, 2 cups, washed and rinsed twice, then strained (this gets the starch off the rice and helps each grain of rice be separate and not clump when cooked) • water, 3 cups

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a medium saucepan with a tight fitting lid over medium high heat.
2. Add the water and rinsed rice and bring to a boil.
3. Stir the rice in the cooking pot. Place the cover on the cooking pot.
4. Turn down the heat under the cooking pot to the lowest setting.
5. Cook for 20 minutes. Then check to see if the rice grains are tender and all the water has been absorbed.
6. The time it takes to cook the rice can vary depending the age of the rice (older rice is drier and takes less time to cook), plus the amount of heat your stovetop generates and the thickness of your cooking pan. So watch the rice in the final moments to see if it is fully cooked but not yet burned, Chef.
7. When the rice is cooked, turn off the heat under the cooking on.

8. Remove the saucepan from the heat with the lid still on the pan and let the rice rest for 10 minutes with the lid on — this will help the rice reabsorb some of the steam in the cooking pan.
9. Before serving, you can fluff the rice with a fork and serve the rice hot or warm. Any left over rice can be used in soups or rice stir-fried dishes so don't you throw that rice away Chef!

COCONUTTY COCONUT JASMINE RICE WITH GINGER

INTRODUCTION

This recipe combines two prominent Thai ingredients — jasmine rice and coconut cream to make a lush version of mealtime rice. The sweetness of this dish makes it a nice partner with the more spicy dishes in this cookbook.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 30 minutes • Total time is 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- coconut cream, 14 ounces, same as 1 3/4 cups or 1 can • water, 2 cups • ginger, 1/2-inch, peeled, and cut into 1/8-inch coins • Thai jasmine rice, 2 cups • salt, 1 teaspoon • cilantro leaf, 1/2 cup, coarsely chopped

INSTRUCTION

1. For making the rice, you will need a saucepan with a tight fitting lid.
2. Combine the coconut cream, water, ginger slices and salt in the saucepan and bring the contents to a rapid boil.
3. Add the rice and stir to combine so each grain of rice comes into contact with the water and coconut cream.
4. Let the rice come to a boil again. Then lower the heat to the lowest setting, place the cover on the pot and let cook for approximately 25 minutes. You will know the rice is cooked when you see the liquid has been absorbed into the rice. If you have a rice cooker, let the magic machine do the cooking for you. After 20 minutes, please check to see most of the coconut cream and water has been absorbed, If not, cook an additional few minutes. The amount of heat your stove generates and the thickness of your cooking pot will influence how long it takes the rice to cook, so pay attention during this phase of the recipe, Chef!
5. After the rice is cooked, remove it from the heat and let the saucepan stand with the cover on for 10 minutes.
6. When you are ready to serve the rice, remove the cover from the saucepan. Fish out the ginger slices and discard.

7. Put the rice in a serving dish and garnish with the cilantro leaves.

BANANAS COOKED IN SWEETENED COCONUT CREAM

INTRODUCTION

Funny Thai Names For This Dish: “Bananas Dressed Like Nuns” or “Bananas in Nunhood” or “Bananas Ordained as Nuns”

What Do Nuns and Bananas Have To Do With Each Other?

Many Thai dishes have a straight forward names that outlines the ingredients and how they are cooked, such as “Stir-Fried Shrimp” or “Boiled Rice Soup”.

This Thai dessert has a unique name as it uses the word “nuns” and does not specify the cooking method. The ingredients and cooking method have nothing to do with nuns, but I have heard the story behind the name “Bananas in Nunhood”, or simply “Bananas Cooked in Sweetened Coconut Cream.”

The most common explanation is that Thai Buddhist female nuns wear white clothes while they are living at a temple, while the male monks wear saffron-colored robes. So this recipe with white bananas, white coconut cream, white sugar and white salt resembles the white clothes worn by the nuns.

It is one of the easiest Thai desserts to make, and it helps to clear and to sweeten the palate after a spicy Thai meal.

The dish can be eaten warm, at room temperature or after being cooled in the refrigerator. I like to add a sprig of mint on top for decoration and flavor, but my Thai cooking partners attest this is not necessary or traditional.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 2 people as a dessert • Prep time is 3 minutes • Cooking time is 4 minutes • Total time is 7 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups coconut cream • 2 medium bananas, cut down the middle and then into 1-inch pieces so the bananas can get submerged in the coconut cream for

cooking • 1 tablespoon white cane / castor sugar, not palm sugar or brown sugar • 1/4 teaspoon salt (it is a Thai thing to make desserts slightly salty — optional for you) • a few leaves of mint for garnish (optional but tastes good and looks pretty) INSTRUCTION

1. Measure the coconut cream into the saucepan.
2. Bring to a gentle boil over medium heat.
3. Add the sugar and salt and stir to dissolve in the coconut cream.
4. Once the sugar is dissolved, add the banana pieces. Cook at a gentle boil until the bananas are soft around the edges but still have a firm texture. The bananas should have a little hardness but not be boiled so long they are mushy. Test a banana piece with a fork to see if it is tender. Depending on the ripeness and density of your bananas, this can take 1 to 3 minutes.
5. Once tender, remove from the heat and place in a serving bowl. Garnish with a few mint leaves.
6. This dish can be served hot, warm, room temperature or chilled, according to your preference.

PALM SUGAR CUSTARD STEAMED IN A KABOCHA SQUASH

INTRODUCTION

This is a favorite dessert that looks so impressive on a serving plate. It is one of the first things I learned to cook in Thailand and I feature it at dinner parties. It can be made ahead of time and stored in the refrigerator, so that you have one dish already made for your party that you don't have to worry about.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 8 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 10 minutes • Cooking time is 90 minutes, plus hours of cooling the dessert • Total time is 95 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- kabocha squash, measuring about 5-inches high and 8-inches across, a hole cut around the stem, stem removed and the seeds and membranes inside removed and discarded, squash rinsed out with water and inside and outside dried • eggs, 4 large (can use chicken or duck) • vanilla essence, 1 teaspoon • palm sugar, 1/2 cup • granulated white sugar, 1/2 cup • coconut cream, 1 cup • flour, 1 tablespoon • salt, 1/2 teaspoon

INSTRUCTION

1. The custard is going to cook inside the squash shell, so make sure all the seeds and membranes inside the squash are cleaned out.
2. In a food processor bowl, place the eggs, vanilla essence, palm sugar, flour, white granulated sugar, coconut cream and salt. Pulse until the sugar has dissolved into the liquid.
3. Strain this mixture through some cheesecloth. Place the strained mixture in the squash.
4. Place the squash with the custard inside on a heat-proof plate — this will make the squash easy to get into the steamer and out after the custard has cooked.
5. Place the squash filled with the custard mixture in a steamer.
6. Now place the lid of the steamer on top of the steamer and make sure it fits snugly so the steam gets trapped inside.
7. Turn on the heat under your steamer to medium-high. Once your steamer is

producing steam, turn down the heat to medium-low.

8. Steam for 90 minutes. Check periodically that there is enough hot water in your steamer.
9. Check to see if the squash is done by inserting a toothpick or skewer into the custard through the hole at the top. If the toothpick comes out clean, the custard is done.
10. Carefully remove the custard from the steamer. Allow the custard to set firm. You can let the custard cool in the refrigerator. When fully chilled and set, you can cut the custard into slices and see the pretty contrast between the bright orange squash and the lighter-colored custard.

LEMONGRASS LEMONADE

INTRODUCTION

Lemongrass grows wild all over Thailand and is used to add a citrus flavor to many dishes. Here we take lemongrass and use it to infuse water for a refreshing lemongrass lemonade.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 2 minutes • Cooking time is 3 minutes • Total time is 5 minutes, plus time for the liquid to cool

INGREDIENTS

- water, 3 cups • sugar, 1/4 cup, granulated white sugar works best • lemongrass stalks and leaves, 2 cups, cut into 1-inch pieces. Discard the root and tough outer layers; the real flavor of the lemongrass is in the inner stalk and the color of this lemonade comes from the leaves.

INSTRUCTION

1. In a saucepan, heat the water over medium-high heat until the water boils.
2. Add the sugar and stir to dissolve.
3. Pour this hot sugar water into a blender.
4. Add the lemongrass to the blender and pulse the ingredients. You can stop now and then to use a spoon to push the various bits that collect on the side of the blender down towards the blades. Continue the pulsing and scraping for 2 minutes.
5. Take this green lemongrass elixir and strain it through a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth.
6. Chill the lemongrass lemonade and serve over ice cubes

HOW TO MAKE THAI RED CURRY PASTE

INTRODUCTION

This is a vegetarian version of Thai red curry paste. The original Thai version of this paste contains a briny paste made of dried and fermented shrimp; here we substitute salt to make this vegetarian. This paste is best kept in an airtight container and will last in the refrigerator for a month or in the freezer for three months. I like to divide the paste into 2 tablespoon portions and freeze in those small ziplock sandwich bags — so when I want some curry paste, I just grab it from the freezer, let it thaw and cook myself some Thai delight!

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Use as needed in curries and stir-fried dishes • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 10 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

A Note on Chiles: The choice of chiles can vary widely depending on where you are shopping. For this recipe, you can use chiles from the market labelled “dried Thai bird’s eye chile” or “dried Thai chiles” or you can substitute chiles labelled *chiles de arbol* or *chiles japones*. All of these chiles are tasty.

- dried *chiles de arbol* or dried *chiles japones* or Thai “bird’s eye chiles”, 20 dried chiles, stems removed • lemongrass, 2 tablespoons, roots removed, outer layers removed, using the thin purple rings at the bottom of the stalk, thinly sliced • galangal, 2 tablespoons, skin removed, thinly sliced • kaffir lime rind, 1 teaspoon, chopped (can substitute the peel of smooth skinned Mexican or Persian lime), use only the green skin and not the white pith from the lime • cilantro, 2 tablespoons, stems and roots are preferred, or leaves (most of the flavor is on the roots and stems of the cilantro plant) • shallots or red onion, 1 tablespoon, skin removed, thinly sliced • garlic, 2 tablespoons, peel removed, thinly sliced • salt, 1 teaspoon • cumin seeds, 1 teaspoon, briefly toasted in a hot pan • coriander seeds, 1 tablespoon, briefly toasted in a hot pan • white pepper powder, 1/2 teaspoon

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a skillet or wok over low heat and let heat 30 seconds.
2. Add the cumin seeds and toast while moving them briskly in the pan, about 30 seconds. Don’t let them burn, Chef! Once toasted, remove from the heat

and reserve.

3. Add the coriander seeds and toast while moving them briskly in the pan, about 30 seconds. Don't let them burn, Chef! Once toasted, remove from the heat and reserve.
4. Using spice mill or a mortar and pestle, grind the toasted cumin and coriander seeds into a fine powder.
5. Now we use a mortar and pestle or rugged kitchen appliance with sharp blades to pulverize the rest of the ingredients to make the paste.
6. Place the salt in the mortar or the machine.
7. Add the cumin seed and the coriander seed you just ground into powder into the mortar or machine.
8. Add the small but powerful red chiles and pulverize them into a paste.
9. Add the lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime rind, cilantro, shallots and garlic and pulverize them. Add the white pepper powder and mix well.
10. Congratulations! You just made Thai curry paste!

HOW TO MAKE THAI GREEN CURRY PASTE

INTRODUCTION

This is a vegetarian version of Thai green curry paste. The original version contain a briny paste made of dried and fermented shrimp; here we substitute salt. This paste is best kept in an airtight container and will last in the refrigerator for a month or in the freezer for three months. I like to divide the paste into 2 tablespoon portions and freeze the paste in those small ziplock sandwich bags — so when I want some curry paste, I just grab it from the freezer, let it thaw and cook myself some Thai delight!

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Makes about 1 cup of paste • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 10 minutes • Total time is 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

The choice of chiles can vary widely depending on where you are shopping. For this recipe, green chiles are essential and I listed the type of Thai chiles that would be used. If you cannot find the chiles that are 3 to 4-inches long labelled “Thai sky-pointing chiles” and the chiles 1 to 2-inches long labelled “Thai bird’s eye chiles” in your market, I suggest you substitute the more frequently available green serrano or green jalapeño chiles — your green curry paste will still taste excellent as these chiles are similar in flavor and spicy punch.

CHILE SUBSTITUTIONS

Try green serrano chiles, 4 fresh, stem removed or jalapeño chiles, 4 fresh, stems removed Note: Either the serrano or the jalapeños would be substituted for the Thai chiles, not both, Chef!

- long green chiles, 5 fresh, usually 3 to 4-inches, stems removed (usually labelled in the market as “Thai sky-pointing chiles”) • small Thai green chiles, 20 fresh, usually 1 to 2-inches long, stems removed (usually labelled in the market as “Thai bird’s eye chiles”) • lemongrass, 2 tablespoons, roots removed, outer layers removed, using the thin purple rings at the bottom of the stalk, thinly sliced • galangal, 2 tablespoons, skin removed, thinly sliced • kaffir lime rind, 1 teaspoon, chopped (can substitute the peel of smooth

skinned Mexican or Persian lime), use only the green skin and not the white pith from the lime • cilantro, 2 tablespoons, stems and roots are preferred, or leaves (most of the flavor is on the roots and stems of the cilantro plant) • shallots or red onion, 1 tablespoon, skin removed, thinly sliced • garlic, 2 tablespoons, peel removed, thinly sliced • salt, 1 teaspoon • cumin seeds, 1 teaspoon, briefly toasted in a hot pan • coriander seeds, 1 tablespoon, briefly toasted in a hot pan • white pepper powder, 1/2 teaspoon **INSTRUCTION**

1. Place a skillet or wok over low heat and let heat 30 seconds.
2. Add the cumin seeds and toast while moving them briskly in the pan, about 30 seconds. Don't let them burn, Chef! Once toasted, remove from the heat and reserve.
3. Add the coriander seeds and toast while moving them briskly in the pan, about 30 seconds. Don't let them burn, Chef! Once toasted, remove from the heat and reserve.
4. Using spice mill or a mortar and pestle, grind the toasted cumin and coriander seeds into a fine powder.
5. Now we use a mortar and pestle or rugged kitchen appliance with sharp blades to pulverize the rest of the ingredients to make the paste.
6. Place the salt in the mortar or the machine.
7. Add the cumin seed and the coriander seed you just ground into powder.
8. Add the two types of green chiles and pulverize them into a paste.
9. Add the lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime rind, cilantro, shallots and garlic and pulverize them. Add the white pepper powder and mix well.
10. Congratulations! You just made Thai curry paste!

HOW TO MAKE THAI MASSAMAN CURRY PASTE

INTRODUCTION

The word “Massaman” for this type of curry refers to the Thai word for people of the Muslim faith. 400 years ago, followers of Islam from India came to Thailand and brought with them spices that were used in their native cooking. These spices include nutmeg, cloves and cinnamon. This Thai curry gets its wonderful smell and taste from these spices. And the recipe gets its name from these ancient Indian Muslim traders.

Your kitchen will smell like a spice cabinet when you make this paste and curry. Friends and family will be lured into the kitchen by the aroma and will complement you and thank you for cooking for them.

In this curry paste, we remove the spicy seeds from the dried chiles, making this paste less spicy relative to other curry pastes.

This is a vegetarian version of Thai Massaman curry paste. The original Thai version of this paste contains a briny paste made of dried and fermented shrimp; here we substitute salt. This paste is best kept in an airtight container and will last in the refrigerator for a month or in the freezer for three months. I like to divide the paste into 2 tablespoon portions and freeze in those small ziplock sandwich bags — so when I want some curry paste, I just grab it from the freezer, let it thaw and cook myself some Thai delight!

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Makes about one cup • Prep time is 30 minutes, including soaking the chiles
- Cooking time 15 minutes, including toasting the spices • Total time is 45 minutes, but only about 15 minutes of activity

INGREDIENTS

A Note on Chiles: The choice of chiles can vary widely depending on where you are shopping. For this recipe, you can use chiles from the market labelled “dried Thai sky-pointing chiles” or you can substitute chiles labelled *chiles de arbol* or *chiles japones*. All of the chiles are tasty.

- dried *chiles de arbol* or dried *chiles japones* or dried Thai “sky-pointing chiles”, 20 dried chiles, stems removed, seeds removed, chile cut into 1-inch pieces and soaked in hot water (see note below) • lemongrass, 2 tablespoons, roots removed, outer layers removed, using the thin purple rings at the bottom of the stalk, thinly sliced • galangal, 2 tablespoons, skin removed, thinly sliced • kaffir lime rind, 1 teaspoon, chopped (can substitute the peel of smooth skinned Mexican or Persian lime), use only the green skin and not the white pith from the lime • cilantro, 2 tablespoons, stems and roots are preferred, or leaves (most of the flavor is on the roots and stems of the cilantro plant) • shallots or red onion, 1 tablespoon, skin removed, thinly sliced • garlic, 2 tablespoons, peel removed, thinly sliced • salt, 1 teaspoon • cumin seeds, 1 teaspoon, briefly toasted in a hot pan • coriander seeds, 1 tablespoon, briefly toasted in a hot pan • white pepper powder, 1/2 teaspoon • ground cinnamon, 1 teaspoon • ground cloves, 1 teaspoon • ground nutmeg, 1 teaspoon • ground cardamon, 1 teaspoon
- INSTRUCTION

1. Take off the stems of the chiles and shake out the seeds. Most of the spice in chiles is in the seeds and the membrane inside. This dish gets its flavor from the dried spices we will add, rather than from chile heat, so we remove the chile seeds.
2. Using kitchen shears, scissors or a knife, cut the chiles into 1-inch pieces. Place the cut up chiles in a bowl and add hot water. Let them soak for 30 minutes. This soaking process makes it easier to pulverize the chiles so this ingredient combines equally and easily with the other ingredients. After 30 minutes, drain the water off the chiles.
3. Place a skillet or wok over low heat and let heat 30 seconds.
4. Add the cumin seeds and toast while moving them briskly in the pan, about 30 seconds. Don't let them burn, Chef! Once toasted, remove from the heat and reserve.
5. Add the coriander seeds and toast while moving them briskly in the pan, about 30 seconds. Don't let them burn, Chef! Once toasted, remove from the heat and reserve.
6. Using spice mill or a mortar and pestle, grind the toasted cumin and coriander seeds into a fine powder.
7. Now we use a mortar and pestle or rugged kitchen appliance with sharp blades to pulverize the rest of the ingredients to make the paste.
8. Place the salt in the mortar or the machine.
9. Add the cumin seed and the coriander seed you just ground into powder.

10. Add the soaked red chiles and pulverize them into a paste.
11. Add the lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime rind, cilantro, shallots and garlic and pulverize them.
12. Add the white pepper powder and mix well.
13. Add the ground cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and cardamon and mix well in the paste.
14. Congratulations! You just made Thai Massaman curry paste!

HOW TO MAKE THAI ROASTED RED CHILE PASTE

INTRODUCTION

This paste makes stir-fried dishes come alive. We roast whole chiles, shallots and garlic to get a delicious smoky flavor and combine these ingredients with chiles, sugar, tangy tamarind and salt soy sauce.

The Thai name for this paste is *Nahm Prik Pow* and I always remember that name since the chiles in this paste pack a pleasing punch, like a “POW” in your mouth! It can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Makes about 1 cup; most dishes require 2 tablespoons of the paste • Prep time is 2 minutes • Cooking time is 15 minutes • Total time is 17 minutes
- ## INGREDIENTS

- dried red chiles, 1/2 cup. There are several types you can use: Thai “bird’s eye chiles”, or *chiles japones* or *chiles de arbol* — look for these in the Asian or Mexican / Latin American section of your supermarket • shallots, 8 units or about 1/2 cup, with the peel on • garlic, 10 large cloves or about 1/2 cup, with the peel on • vegetable oil, 1/2 cup • sugar, 3 tablespoons (can use palm sugar or brown sugar) • tamarind liquid, 3 tablespoons (you can buy this product or make it from the recipe in this cookbook) • soy sauce, 1 tablespoon

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a skillet or wok on the stove over medium-low heat. Add the chiles and stir frequently so each part of the chile gets charred by the heat. Stir-fry like this for about 4 minutes or until you see the chiles darken in color. Then remove from the heat and let cool on a plate.
2. Add the shallots and garlic to the cooking pan and move them with a spatula so the outside skin gets charred and the insides get soft, about 7 minutes. Carefully remove from the pan and let cool on a plate.
3. Once the chiles are cooled, take off the stems and tops of the chiles and shake out most of the seeds. The spicy heat in chiles is largely concentrated

in the seeds, so here we are keeping the chile flavor while managing the spicy heat. Cut the chiles into small pieces the size of a grain of rice. Place the chiles in a blender or food processor. Now wash your hands and the cutting board and knife.

4. Remove the skins from the roasted shallots and garlic, and discard the skins. Place the peeled shallots and garlic in the blender with the chiles. Pulse or blend the ingredients together for 20 seconds and then scrape down the sides of the machine bowl with a spoon. Pulse for another 20 seconds or until the ingredients are finely chopped.
5. Add 1/4 cup of the vegetable oil into the blender and pulse for another 30 seconds until you get a smooth paste. Remove this mixture from the machine and place it in a bowl.
6. Now back at the stove, heat a wok or skillet over medium heat. Place the remaining 1/4 cup of vegetable oil in the pan and let heat for 30 seconds. Add the chile, shallot and garlic paste to the pan.
7. Cook it in the oil until the paste becomes darker and you can smell its heady scent. This will take between 3 and 5 minutes, depending on the heat your stove generates and the thickness of your cooking pan. Once the paste has turned that darker color, remove it from the heat and let it cool in a bowl.
8. Add the sugar, tamarind liquid and soy sauce to the bowl with the chiles, shallots and garlic, and stir well. Transfer the paste to an airtight jar and keep in the refrigerator. Each time you use the paste, give it a good stir so the solid ingredients combine with the vegetable oil. The paste will last up to a month if stored in the refrigerator.

HOW TO MAKE THAI ‘THREE BUDDIES’ PESTO CILANTRO PASTE

INTRODUCTION

The traditional Thai name for this paste is the “Three Buddies” since the three ingredients of cilantro and garlic and pepper go together so well. It can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for a week or frozen up to a month.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Makes 3 tablespoons, enough to make the stir-fried vegetable recipe in this cookbook • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 0 minutes • Total time is 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- cilantro, 1 cup packed, leaves, stems and trimmed roots • garlic, 1 tablespoon, skin removed and roughly chopped (makes it easier to pound if you are using a mortar • white pepper powder, 1 teaspoon • salt, 1/2 teaspoon

INSTRUCTION

1. If using a mortar and pestle, place the garlic and the salt in the mortar and pound until you have a smooth paste. If using a kitchen machine, you can add all the ingredients into the machine’s bowl and process until the paste is smooth.
2. If using a mortar and pestle, add the cilantro to the garlic and salt and pound until the green cilantro is incorporated in the paste.
3. Add the white peppercorn and mix in with the paste.
4. Store in an airtight container — I find ziplock bags are easy to unfreeze when I want to make a meal.

HOW TO MAKE THAI SAUCE OF LIFE — CHILE, SOY SAUCE, SUGAR AND LIME JUICE TABLETOP CONDIMENT

INTRODUCTION

Where Western dining tables feature salt and black pepper to season dishes, Thai diners combine the salt and spice in one tabletop sauce, with chiles and a salty sauce mixed together. This sauce can be used to increase the spicy and salty flavors of any dish. As this simple sauce is so delicious and so commonly seen in Thai restaurants, I call this the “Sauce of Life.” This recipe has been adapted to vegetarian diets by substituting soy sauce for Thai fish sauce.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Add as needed to food to make life worth living • Prep time is 2 minutes • Cooking time is 0 minutes • Total time is 2 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- soy sauce, 2 tablespoons • lime juice, 1 tablespoon • chiles, 1 spicy little chile such as the chiles usually labelled “Thai bird’s eye chiles” or “Thai chiles”, usually 1 to 2-inches long, stem discarded and chile chopped into slender 1/4-inch rings • sugar, 2 teaspoons, white granulated sugar is best in this recipe

INSTRUCTION

1. Add the soy sauce, lime juice, chiles and sugar to an airtight container.
2. Mix well to dissolve the sugar in the soy sauce and lime juice.
3. Mix well before each use. Use as needed and store in the refrigerator when not using. Will last about 2 weeks.

HOW TO MAKE THAI FRESH VEGETABLE STOCK

INTRODUCTION

Vegetable stock is so easy to make and greatly boosts the flavor of dishes. I make the stock, let it cool and then freeze the stock in a clearly marked ice cube tray. So, whenever I need some stock for a recipe, I have a convenient cube equalling 1 tablespoon that can be brought to room temperature and used. I take the frozen cubes out of the specially labelled ice cube tray and keep the vegetable stock cubes in a zip lock bag for future use.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Makes 5 cups of stock • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 30 minutes, largely not needing to watch the pot • Total time is 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- water, 3 quarts • carrots, approximately 4 cups, tops removed and peeled, cut into 1-inch chunks • celery, approximately 3 cups, leaves removed, cut into 1-inch chunks • onion, approximately 1 cup, stem removed, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces • ginger, a 2-inch piece, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch rings • dried mushrooms, 5 mushrooms, shiitake or Chinese mushrooms are best • cilantro roots, stems and leaves, about 1 cup, roughly chopped (if you can get cilantro with roots, bravo — make sure you clean the roots well) • garlic, 5 large cloves, peeled, cut in two

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a large stockpot over medium heat. Add the water and all the ingredients to the pot.
2. Bring to a brisk boil and then reduce the heat to the lowest setting.
3. Skim off any foam that rises to the top of the water and discard this scummy foam — it doesn't taste good.
4. Let this cook over the lowest heat for 30 minutes.
5. After 30 minutes, strain the vegetable stock through a sieve and let cool to room temperature.
6. Refrigerate up to 3 days or freeze as discussed in the Introduction.

HOW TO MAKE “MY MOUTH LOVES ME” CUCUMBER RELISH

INTRODUCTION

This simple cucumber, onion and peanut relish is served to give a flavor contrast to rich dishes such as the coconut cream-based curries. Once you have had this dish, you will make it again and again. It keeps in the refrigerator for about three days.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Serves 4 as part of a multi-course Thai meal • Prep time is 5 minutes • Cooking time is 2 minutes • Total time is 7 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- water, 1/2 cup • vinegar, 1/2 cup, distilled white vinegar is best • sugar, 1/2 cup, white granulated • salt, 1 teaspoon • cucumber, about 14-ounces, see instructions below • red onion or shallot, 1/2 cup, skin removed, finely minced • peanuts, dry-roasted, finely chopped, 1/2 cup • cilantro, roughly chopped, 3 tablespoons, plus 1 tablespoon of the leaves reserved for garnish

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add the vinegar, water, sugar and salt. Let this come to a soft boil, and stir to dissolve the sugar and salt in the water and vinegar. Let this cook for 2 minutes until the liquid gets slightly thicker, then remove from the heat, place in a bowl and let cool.
3. Peel the cucumber and cut into quarters. Scoop out the seeds and discard. Cut each quarter section into 1/4-inch slices so you have cute little cucumber triangles.
4. Add these cucumber triangles to the bowl with the cooled vinegar and water mixture.
5. Add the onion and cilantro to the bowl and stir to mix.
6. When serving this relish, divide the cucumber relish into even portions among your guests.
7. Sprinkle the peanuts on top and garnish with the loose cilantro leaves.
8. When eating, all these ingredients can be mixed together and then eaten as a

relish with the other fine food you have made!

HOW TO MAKE TANGY TAMARIND LIQUID

INTRODUCTION

Tamarind is a tangy fruit with a seed inside. Here, the fruit of the mature tamarind gets soaked in water to get the pulp so we can add a tangy / sour note to dishes.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Use as needed to add a tangy flavor to food • Prep time is 2 minutes • Cooking time is 28 minutes, mostly idle time • Total time is 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- tamarind pulp, 1/2 cup • water, 1 cup, hot

INSTRUCTION

1. Place the sticky tamarind paste in a bowl and cover with the boiling water. With a fork, mash the tamarind in the hot water and let stand for about 30 minutes, occasionally stirring it with a fork to separate the tamarind pulp from the seeds.
2. Once the hot water and time have loosened the tamarind pulp, massage the seeds one time with your fingers to release the last of the pulp. Now strain the liquid through a fine mesh sieve and rub the seeds on the strainer to get the last of the tamarind fruit off the seeds. Discard the seeds.
3. Store this in an airtight container.

HOW TO MAKE ROASTED RICE POWDER CROUTON

INTRODUCTION

In the European and American tradition, toasted and flavored bread cubes called “croutons” are added to salads to give the dish a little crunch. Thai salads use dry roasted and toasted rice that has been ground into a rough powder to add a nutty taste and heavenly fragrance to salads.

INVESTMENT OF TIME

- Makes about 5 tablespoon servings • Prep time is 1 minute • Cooking time is 5 minutes cooking, plus 1 minute grinding • Total time is 7 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- Thai jasmine long-grained rice, 1/4 cup, dry (or you can use Thai “glutinous rice” also known as “sticky rice” or “sweet rice”), or another type of rice such as Japanese sushi rice.

INSTRUCTION

1. Place a wok or small skillet over low heat. Add the rice grains to the hot pan.
2. Stir and shake the pan continuously so the rice turns a light brown in the pan but does not burn. Depending on the heat your stove emits and the thickness of your cooking pan, this process can take between 3 and 5 minutes. Resist the temptation to increase the heat to shorten the cooking time, Chef. Higher heat will cause the rice to burn, and if the rice burns, tears will fall down like rain as we cannot use burned rice — it is too bitter. So, slow and steady wins the race in this dish.
3. When the grains of rice are evenly browned, remove from the heat and let cool in a bowl.
4. Now we grind the roasted rice grains into a coarse powder. If you have a rugged mortar and pestle, you can add the rice to the mortar and use the pestle to grind the rice into a rough powder. You will likely have some fine powder and some broken pieces of rice. This is the result we want — whole grains of the rice are too tough to chew. If you have a stout kitchen spice

grinder or other kitchen appliance with blades, you can pulse the rice grains until you get that fragrant chunky powder.

5. Reserve in an airtight container.

TABLE OF EQUIVALENT MEASURES

This table is for converting common Imperial measurements to Metric, and vice versa.

Liquid and Dry Measures

U.S. Measurement

Metric Measurement

1/4 teaspoon	1.25 milliliters
1/2 teaspoon	2.5 milliliters
1 teaspoon	5 milliliters
1 tablespoon (3 teaspoons)	15 milliliters
1 fluid ounce (2 tablespoons)	30 milliliters
1/4 cup	60 milliliters
1/3 cup	80 milliliters
1/2 cup	120 milliliters
1 cup	240 milliliters
1 pint (2 cups)	480 milliliters
1 quart (4 cups)	960 milliliters
1 quart (4 quarts)	3.85 liters

OVEN TEMPERATURE

<u>Farenheit</u>	<u>Celsius</u>	<u>Gas Range</u>
250	120	1/2 mark
275	140	1
300	150	2
325	160	3
350	180	4
375	190	5
400	200	6
425	220	7
450	230	8
475	240	9
500	260	10

A WORK OF LOVE

Thank you so much for purchasing this book — it is the result of nearly a decade of travel and research and cooking and testing. If you enjoyed the book, please leave a review on Amazon — it helps other people interested in vegetarian cooking find the book and use it for better, healthier, tastier life! Many thanks!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chef Tummy writes recipes, stories, books and songs about food, especially Thai food.

Chef Tummy was born on the rocky coast of Maine and went to school in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. He has worked as an aide to a U.S. Senator, as a Washington representative for a Silicon Valley technology company, as an investment manager, as well as stints as a waiter, cook and caterer, wedding planner and officiant, house painter, butler, Christmas tree farmer, English teacher and factory worker.

He is a 1985 graduate of the University of New Hampshire and a 1996 graduate of Columbia Business School.

Chef Tummy attended the Samui Institute of Thai Culinary Arts (SITCA) Thai Cooking School on Koh Samui for the Intensive Ten-Day Thai Food and Fruit Carving Course in 2004. The course was taught by SITCA owner Chef Roongfa Shringnam.

He later studied with Thai Chef Dusit Limmathuroskul, owner of Haadlad Prestige Resort & Spa. With Chef Dusit, Chef Tummy designed, opened, owned and operated the Chef Tummy Thai Cooking School on Koh Phangan from 2008 to 2013 and taught Thai cooking to students from 30 countries. Chef Tummy's cooking partner is Chef "Princess" Atjima Muangman of Surat Thani, Thailand.

Chef Tummy took a 6,002 mile motorcycle trip around Thailand to taste the four main regional styles. Chef Tummy wrote a full-length book about the trip, including hard-to-find Thai recipes, also available on Amazon.

Chef Tummy's writing about Thailand and Thai food has been published in The World is a Kitchen anthology (2005) and in S.E.A. Backpacker Magazine (2008).

Chef Tummy can often be found wandering through Thai markets looking for something to eat or playing guitar and singing in any place that has cold beer.

Chef Tummy's recipe videos and songs can be seen on www.YouTube.com under the cheftummycooks page.

He also is a semi-professional wine cellar evaluator. No wines are too expensive or rare for Chef Tummy to carefully and fully sample on your behalf and evaluate for merit. He will bring his own corkscrew.

More books on Thai food, Thai travel and Thai culture can be seen on www.cheftummy.com.